

### **Mainstreaming and neighbourhood renewal**

1. Mainstreaming is not a simple concept and there are a variety of different models of mainstreaming. Conventionally mainstreaming has focussed upon the process of transferring policy, resources, good practice or activity from area-based initiatives or special programmes into the core of mainstream service provision.
2. Mainstreaming in the context of neighbourhood renewal can be defined as “influencing ‘mainstream services’ to make them work better in deprived neighbourhoods, by shaping and resourcing them for the task, and making them focus explicitly on the places and people most in need of their support”.
3. Mainstreaming is an activity that can be carried out at local, regional and national levels and different models and tools have been adapted to match the opportunities available to influence mainstream services. For effective mainstreaming to benefit neighbourhood renewal there needs to be some:
  - Bending (re-allocating) of mainstream resources – changing spending patterns to target the most deprived areas;
  - Focussing policy on deprived areas, for example through legislative change or challenging floor targets;
  - Reshaping services to reflect local needs, e.g. by removing any organisational designs which prevent deprived areas receiving an increased level of support, or through more effective targeting of services; or improving access;
  - Joining-up of services, programmes and targets, for example, through inter-departmental action and multi-agency delivery;
  - Learning good practice including from pilot or pathfinder projects, including making stronger links between ABIs and main programmes.
4. These are wide-ranging groups of activities, and there is no single blueprint for any of them. Service providers should have the freedom to choose which of the activities are most appropriate to them in order to deliver the agreed outcomes and targets.
5. Central departments, agencies and local service providers need to enhance the way in which they take into account how mainstream policies and strategies impact on deprived neighbourhoods and look at the needs of these neighbourhoods when planning and delivering programmes and services. The Neighbourhood Renewal unit (NRU) is working with departments to ensure this focus on mainstream policy and strategies is reflected in their current work on delivery plans for public service agreement (PSA) floor targets.